



# Xtreme Resolution

The British Manufacturer Cyrus is legendary for incredible musicality, playfulness and coherence, which is delivered from a cute metal housing the size of a shoebox. The new flagship series XR now aims to elevate all of this to unprecedented levels. STEREO took a closer look at the i9-XR integrated amplifier (3400 Euros) and the CDi-XR CD player (2200 Euros) for the first test worldwide.

*Tom Frantzen*

Cyrus has given their brand new XR series a clear goal: to outdo all predecessors in terms of power and sound. The cast light metal housing made of an aluminum magnesium alloy is almost synonymous with the brand, keeping the mechanics and electronics superbly shielded. Apart from that almost all parts were reexamined for this prestigious project.

The new series' name „XR“ stands for „Xtreme Resolution“. With an even stronger focus on the neuralgic, sound-determining points, the developers found potential for improvement.

We all know that 60 or 70 % of the optimum can be achieved relatively easily with good material and personnel, but that each step beyond costs a lot of money. Quite a few devices also lack a sort of „magic“ to match the best of the best.

Cyrus was never one to set lab records, since that was never their goal. Even now, with shorter signal paths, an even stronger power supply, better rectifier diodes, a further optimized converter and fewer interferences, this will not be the case.

While the compact housings are certainly advantageous for protecting against interference from the outside as well as for easier placement in the living room and for the enthusiasm of fans, they also pose difficulties in isolating small from large signals or analog and digital technologies. This has always been a particular challenge, which the engineers in Huntingdon have mastered exemplarily – perhaps even in an outstandingly „magical“ way.

The output power of the amplifier circuits, for instance, is just astounding. Of course, they use DC-coupled Class AB technology, and depending on the loudspeaker load they can reach between 150 and 200 watts – from an amplifier that weighs less than seven kilogram. The measured data is unquestionably good, as was and is also the case with devices from the One and Classic/Signature lines. Two zeros behind the decimal point in distortion values speaks for themselves.

Simply because of the somewhat higher, yet still moderate prices, the budget for development has however been a lot bigger

with the „XR“ – and that means an advantage that should not be underestimated. Everything was also checked in listening tests.

There are naturally some similarities, for example in the very broadband power amplifier section of the integrated amplifier as well as in the high-performance converter, which reflects the further developed, second generation of the proven QXR-DAC with a completely new, extremely fast analog buffer stage.

On a side note, the best ESS Sabre 32-bit converter chips are used here. With them, both the CD player and the DAC of the integrated amplifier can switch between no less than seven different digital filter characteristics, all of which sound subtly different because they are either time- or frequency-response-optimized or work with an ideal compromise of both. A dreamlike playground for hi-fi fans, because it almost feels like you can choose between seven devices each.

## Tried and Improved

The preamplifier of the i9, however, has been completely redesigned from scratch and was equipped with relay-switched input selection and an innovative amplification stage.

The CDi with slot-in drive, which even remained identical in name to its brother except for the addition „XR“, the process was similar. Why not? It simply doesn't make sense to completely reinvent the wheel if parts of it are already so good.

Nevertheless, the company invested a full

## WHAT WE'VE HEARD

**Carolin No:  
Favorite Sin**



The Singer/Songwriter-Duo from Würzburg, Southern Germany, impresses with refreshing musicality and great sound.



The touch-sensitive buttons and the menus make operation convenient and the HD display is a pleasure to read.



### CYRUS COMPANION

Cyrus gives each of their devices a System remote to accompany it.

ten years in the realization of the XR series, which suggests that interim results were certainly incorporated into the current products. Anything else would be foolish, of course.

The matte „Phantom“ surfaces differ significantly from those of the „smaller“ series manufactured by Cyrus. The high-resolution displays have also become incomparably more modern and powerful.

The touch-sensitive buttons and the cleverly designed menus are also new. However, we find it commendable that the discreetly upgraded general design of the new top series can still be combined with other Cyrus devices, in fact even with much older ones.

This is enormously important for people who – like me – already own Cyrus components. A new, more flexible version of the popular „Hark“ design rack, which is tailored to the „Briquettes“, is also already being developed and realized.

Cyrus equipped the Classic series integrated amplifiers with a very good, low-noise phono input (MM). This was indeed once again granted to the new XR amp in addition to 768 kHz PCM and DSD-512-capable USB.

And of course, typical for Cyrus, a possible upgrade path was thought of for both components. A brand-new, optional PSU-XR power supply with up to five regulated circuits can be implemented retroactively in a future-proof way to achieve the next higher sound level.

When connected to the PSU-XR, the integrated amplifier uses two of the circuits for the preamplifier and one for the integrated power amplifier. Meanwhile, the CDi-XR – already having nine regulated power supply units – supplies the analog section, the motors and the master clock externally with it after connection to the external PSU.

### Listening Test

This is undoubtedly the smallest integrated amplifier known to me which provides such rhythm and musicality. Breathtaking. It is as fast as an arrow, airy and precise, even in demanding „steep curves“ it goes to work casually and shows special strengths in the musically so eminently important midrange. We know these from Cyrus, and here they are on top paired with slight improvements



**For the drive of the Cyrus CDi-XR the British engineers chose a particularly robust slot-in type and granted it excellent servo control.**



**The power supply, which is also important for the „leadership qualities“ of an amp, has always been the focus of Cyrus developers.**

in sovereignty, but also more filigree fine drawings and transparency up to the ends of the spectrum. In addition, it once again sounds much bigger and also stronger than it is, guiding even critical speakers effortlessly and confidently.

Here again, similar things can be said about the CD player: it immediately plays with charm and charisma and conveys much of the rousing energy and coloration that has made Cyrus famous, starting with the legendary „One“ in the mid-1980s. The newly and uncompromisingly designed output stage announced itself very pleasantly.

Thus the Würzburg singer/songwriter duo Carolin No enchanted their audience even more. Whether it's large-scale orchestral

works such as Dvorák's „Symphony from the New World“ or pop sound paintings such as „The Wall“, the Cyrus never loses track. Even in „School“ from Supertramp's „Live in Paris“ it masters the sometimes almost swallowed textures in the bass, which it superbly carves out and makes traceable. Timing, focus and fine detail are outstanding.

We heard from Cyrus that their aim is now to offer „good“ quality with the „ONE“ series, even „better“ quality with the Classic/Signature series and „best“ sound quality with the XR. We can confirm this with knowledge of the portfolio and after corresponding comparisons in good conscience.

If you, as a Cyrus fan, can hardly believe that without compromising in the field of harmonic coherence, everything can even be a bit better than before, you should definitely listen to the new devices. People who want to have something visually as well as sonically extraordinary, even if they haven't had the small machines from Great Britain on their radar so far, should also do the same. It's worth it.

This is definitely a new level for the already sonically strong jewels coming out of Huntingdon. You don't really want to give them away any more, and by no means only because they look „cute“ on top of everything else. Chapeau! ■



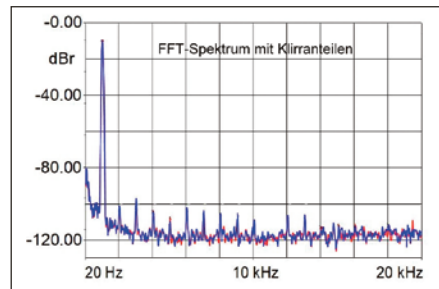
**Everything's there – and even a little more. The CDi-XR has two analog outputs, the amp has DAC, phono, pre outs and headphone jack.**

## Cyrus CDi-XR

**Price:** around 2200 €  
**Dimensions:** 22x8x36 cm (WxHxD)  
**Warranty:** 2 Years  
**Contact:** Bellevueaudio  
 Tel.: +49 2303 3050178  
 www.bellevueaudio.de

The brand new CDi-XR CD player from the flagship series of the British noble forge Cyrus further improves upon the already very musical and rhythmic CDi. For barely more than 2000 Euro you can hardly find anything more coherent.

### Measurement Results



Signal-to-noise ratio „Digital Zero“	90 dB
Quantization Noise Ratio 0 dBFS	84 dB
Converter Linearity at -90 dB	0,3 dB
Output Resistance Cinch	253 Ohms
Output Voltage Cinch 0 dBFS	2,4 V
Distortions at -9dBFS	0,01 %
Emphasis Detection (DAC)	ok
Square	ok
Pulse	ok
Jitter	1,9 ns
Deviation from the sampling frequency	-13,7 ppm
Amplitude of the data stream	445 mV
Read-in time	7 s
Disturbances of the information track	0,8 mm
Surface Disturbances	>0,9 mm
Power Consumption Stby./Idle (at)	/6,1 W(223 Volt)
Weight:	3,8 kg

### Lab Comment

Consistently at least good to excellent values, for distortion and noise, but also for practical relevant measurements such as read-in time or scanning reliability.

### Features

Remote control, high-resolution display, 2 x Analog Out, digital outputs, connection for optional PSU-XR power supply.

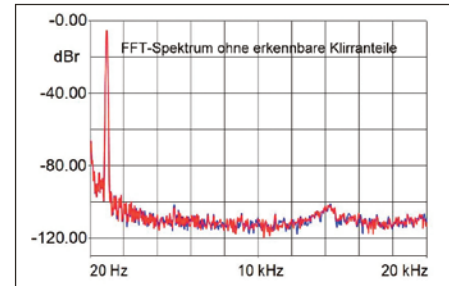
STEREO-TEST	
SOUND LEVEL CD-PLAYER	76%
PRICE/PERFORMANCE	
★★★★☆	
<b>EXCELLENT</b>	

## Cyrus i9-XR

**Price:** around 3400 €  
**Dimensions:** 22x8x38 cm (WxHxD)  
**Warranty:** 2 Years  
**Contact:** Bellevueaudio  
 Tel.: +49 2303 3050178  
 www.bellevueaudio.de

Extremely agile and „fluidly“ dynamic integrated amplifier with powerful DAC. The XR series marks a new, even higher level of quality thanks to fine-tuning in detail. A highly musical experience!

### Measurement Results



Continuous Power (8 Ohms / 4 Ohms)	73 W/115 W
Pulse Power at 4 Ohms (1kHz)	>140 W
Distortions 50mW/5W/1dB Pmax	0,02 %/0,002 %/0,002 %
Intern. 50mW/5W/1dB Pmax	0,008 %/0,002 %/1,7 %
Signal-to-noise ratio at 50mW/ 5W	71 dB/89 dB
Signal-to-noise ratio Phono MM (5 mV for 5 Watt)	83 dB(A)
Damping factor at 4 Ohms (63Hz/1kHz/14kHz)	94/94/81
Upper cut-off frequency (-3dB/40hm)	69 kHz
Crosstalk Line 1 > Line 2	74 dB
Synchronization error Volume at -60dB	<0,1 dB
Stereo channel separation at 10kHz	42 dB
Power Consumption Stby./Idle (at)	/12,4 W(223 Volt)
Weight:	6,5 kg

### Lab Comment

Very decent performance, excellent distortion behaviour and good signal-to-noise ratio/good damping factor. The DAC also convinces. When measuring the pulse power it switches off at 140W/10% distortion.

### Features

Remote control; Phono-MM; four high-level inputs; PCM/DSD-capable DAC/USB with 2 coaxial/optical inputs each; high-resolution display; Pre Out/Fix Out; headphone amplifier; connection for optional PSU-XR power supply.

STEREO-TEST	
SOUND LEVEL INT. AMP	85%
PRICE/PERFORMANCE	
★★★★★	
<b>OUTSTANDING</b>	

### TEST DEVICES

#### CD-Player:

Audiolab 8300 CDO,  
 Cyrus CDi,  
 Lua Cantilena Mk III GS  
 NOS

#### Integrated Amps:

Canor AI 2.10,  
 Cyrus 8.2 DAC QXR

#### Loudspeakers:

B&W 705 Signature,  
 DALI Epicon 6

#### Cables:

HMS, Supra Cables